



Fit in Your Fiber!

Fiber is one of those nutrients that many of us know is important but that remains a bit of a mystery. In fact, the average American only consumes 15 grams of fiber a day which is considerably less than the recommended level.

The HealthSmart Wellness Team wants to break down those barriers and make sure you are eating the recommended 25 to 35 grams of fiber every day. You might even be surprised how easy it is to fit in your fiber!

Importance of Fiber

Fiber is what gives strength and structure to plants. Most grains, beans, vegetables, and fruits contain fiber. Foods rich in fiber are often low in calories and fat, and they fill you up more. They may also reduce your risks for certain health problems.

Types of Fiber and Their Benefits

There are two types of fiber: insoluble and soluble. They both aid digestion and help you maintain a healthy weight.

Insoluble fiber is found in whole grains, cereals, certain fruits and vegetables (such as apple skin, bran flakes and carrots). Insoluble fiber provides the “bulk” needed for proper functioning of the stomach and intestines. It promotes healthy intestinal action and prevents constipation and intestinal disease.

Soluble fiber is in oats, beans, and certain fruits and vegetables (such as strawberries and peas). This type of fiber dissolves in water to form a gel-like material. Soluble fiber can reduce cholesterol which may help lower the risk of heart disease, lowers your risk for stroke and helps control blood sugar levels.

CHALLENGE RULES

- Fill out your name, email and employer at the top of your Challenge Log.
- Record your results daily on your Challenge Log by checking off one icon for every 5 grams of fiber that you eat.
- The challenge goal is to include 25-35 grams of fiber daily.
- Submit your completed Challenge Log by **October 6th** to the Wellness Coach Team.

Tips for Increasing Your Fiber

- ▶ Start your day with a high-fiber breakfast cereal. Opt for cereals with "bran" or "fiber" in the name. Or add a few tablespoons of unprocessed wheat bran to your favorite cereal.
- ▶ Add crushed bran cereal or unprocessed wheat bran to baked products such as meatloaf, breads, muffins, casseroles, cakes and cookies.
- ▶ Switch to whole grain breads. Food label lingo can be confusing and even misleading. Foods labeled as multi-grain, seven-grain, bran, or stone-ground do not guarantee the product contains whole grains. Be sure to choose products that state 100% whole grain with at least 2 grams of dietary fiber per serving.
- ▶ Take advantage of ready-to-use vegetables. Mix chopped frozen broccoli into prepared spaghetti sauce.
- ▶ Eat more beans, peas and lentils. Add kidney beans to canned soup or a green salad. Or make nachos with refried black beans, baked tortilla chips and salsa.
- ▶ Eat fruit at every meal. Apples, bananas, oranges, pears and berries are good sources of fiber.
- ▶ Make snacks count. Fresh and dried fruit, raw vegetables, and low-fat popcorn and whole-grain crackers are all healthy choices.
- ▶ Be sure to drink plenty of water when eating a high fiber diet to avoid any discomfort!
- ▶ Go to <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/high-fiber-foods/art-20050948> for a list of high fiber foods!
































Challenge Log

NAME: _____


EMAIL: _____

EMPLOYER: _____

September 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 	2 	3 	4 	5 	6 
7 	8 	9 	10 	11 	12 	13 
14 	15 	16 	17 	18 	19 	20 
21 	22 	23 	24 	25 	26 	27 
28 	29 	30 	 <i>*Consult with your physician before changing your health habits</i>			

CHALLENGE LOG INSTRUCTIONS:

- Fill out your name, email, and employer at the top of the Challenge Log.
- Record your results daily by checking off one  for each 5 grams of fiber you eat.
- The challenge goal is to include 25-35 grams of fiber each day.
- Submit your completed Challenge Log by **October 6th** to the Wellness Coach Team to receive your challenge certificate.

Wellness Coach Team Contact Information:

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